

A
DIALOGUE

Between the

Rev. Mr. JENKIN EVANS

A N D

Mr. PETER DOBSON,

CONCERNING

B I S H O P S.

DIALOGUE

Rev. Mr. Jackson

Mr. P. A. Johnson

Mr. A. B. Johnson
Mr. C. D. Johnson
Mr. E. F. Johnson

Mr. G. H. Johnson

Mr. I. J. Johnson

A
DIALOGUE

Between the

Rev. Mr. JENKIN EVANS

ASSISTANT

Minister to the Curate of *White-chapel*,

A N D

Mr. PETER DOBSON,

A Man of SENSE and some LEARNING, and
a CITIZEN of *LONDON*.

CONCERNING

BISHOPS,

Particularly the

BISHOPS in the Principality of *WALES*.

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OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

AND

OF THE

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A
DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

The Rev. Mr. *Jenkin Evans* and
Mr. *Peter Dobson*,

CONCERNING

BISHOPS.

D. **T**HE Reverend Mr. *Evans* here!
This is a Favour indeed ; I hope
you have not been come long?

E. About half an Hour ; I have been
amusing my self in your little Library ; upon
my Word you have a pretty Collection of
Books and well chosen.

D. You know, Doctor, I have in a great
Measure left off Business ; my Friends gave
me a tolerable Education ; I was brought up
at St. *Paul's* School, and I was pretty near
the Top ; I have taken care to preserve at
least the Learning I had, and can still under-
stand a Latin Author reasonably well ; my
Father design'd me for a Clergyman, but
having a Dispute with the Minister of the
B Parish

Parish about his Dues, he put me into Trade; Mr. *Evans*, you are a happy Man, you were brought up at the University;

E. I thank God, Mr. *Dobson*, I have suck'd the Breasts of *Alma Mater*; I was sent to *Jesus* College before I was Twenty; in two Years I was made *Senior Soph*, and had not seen four and Twenty when I was *Batchelor* of Arts.

D. I see you have my *Folio* Common Prayer-Book before you: I bought it when I was Church-warden of the Parish.

E. I think I always find it open upon the Table; I am glad you put so great a Value upon that excellent Book; I am fallen accidentally upon the *Office* concerning the *Ordaining* and *Consecrating* of Bishops.

D. I am glad of it with all my Heart; I have longed a great while to know something about that Business, but you will never have Patience with all my impertinent Questions. [*Now must I humour this choleric Welsh Divine, or I shall get nothing out of him: He is a strange Mixture, God knows. Aside.*]

E. I shall be ready to answer any thing that lies in my Power, but it is a serious Matter, and requires great Gravity and Consideration.

D. To be sure it does; Then Mr. *Evans*, since you are so good, pray tell me in the first Place what's properly meant by a *Bishop*?

E. A

E. A Bishop according to the *Greek* Derivation is an *Overseer*.

D. Why is he called a *Bishop*?

E. He has that Name from the *Saxon* Word *Biscop*, which we derive from the *Greek* *Episcopos*, *Speculator*, *Explorator*, a *Spy*, a *Looker-out*, a *Sentinel* or *Watchman*; in short he is as I may say, a *Supervisor* of the *Business* and *Affairs* of the *Church*: This before us you see is the *Form* of *Ordaining* or *Consecrating* of *Bishops*, that is of *English* *Bishops*, of *Christian* *Bishops*.

D. God forbid there should be any *Bishops* that are not *Christian* *Bishops*, sure there are no *Heathen* *Bishops*.

E. There were *Heathen* *Bishops* and good *Bishops* too; The old *Grecians* had their *Episcopoi*, and so had the *Romans*; I remember that the divine *Cicero* in one of his *Epistles* tells us that he was a *Bishop*.

D. What was the *Business* of those *Bishops*?

E. To inquire into the *Manners* of the *People* under their *Jurisdiction*, and take notice of their *Conduct* and *Behaviour*.

D. But are there no *Heathen* *Bishops* now?

E. No not one upon the *Face* of the *Earth*.

Rara avis in terris nigroq; simillima Cygno.

You'll excuse the *Latin* *Mr. Dobson*?

D. O Dear Doctor, I love it of all Things. This Sacred Office, I find, begins with an excellent Prayer. I wish those that are concerned would frequently reflect upon it with the Attention it deserves — *Give Grace we beseech thee to all Bishops and Pastors of thy Church that they may diligently preach thy Word, and duly administer the Godly Discipline thereof.* The venerable Compilers of this Form, I suppose had no Notion that a Bishop as soon as he was consecrated was discharg'd from the Duty of a Priest, or was immediately to burn his Commonplace Book, as if it was beneath his Dignity to *preach diligently*, that is, *constantly* in his Diocese; whereas a Bishop has without doubt the principal Care of every Soul within his District, and is more especially bound not only to see the Offices of the Church, the Duties of Praying, Preaching and Administring the Sacraments are faithfully and regularly executed by the parochial Clergy, but to *preach diligently* himself in one or other of his Churches, as he finds most conducive to the Edification of his People, and the spiritual Improvements of the Flocks committed to his Charge. This must be the Meaning of the Words, if they have any Meaning at all, and how They acquit themselves in this important Case, I should be glad to be inform'd.

E. That may be easily done; for when They are resident in their Sees, They are a
mighty

mighty Relief to the parochial Clergy ; They travel from Church to Church in all Weathers, through Frost and Snow, over Hills and high Mountains ; They Preach here, read Prayers there, Catechise, Expound, Confirm. They are never idle, for They well know that *Woe be unto them if they preach not the Gospel*. Do you think they wrap their Talents in a Napkin and let them grow rusty ? Can you imagine they do nothing but walk to the Cathedral on a Sunday in State with the *Vergers* with their *Silver-Maces* before them ?

D. Why Sir, some of them do not reside in their Dioceses at all ; others are there for a Month or two to take the Benefit of the Summer Air, and taste the Venison of the Country, and then perhaps they may *preach* once or so, and a mighty Favour it is ; but the chief Account of their *Preaching* we have from the News Papers ; you hear now and then of a Charity Sermon, or a Sermon before the *Lords*, and exceedingly seldom, they will vouchsafe to ascend the Pulpit of the Parish wherein they live, and set all the Congregation upon the Stare. Some of them do not preach five times in a Year in their own Diocese, and many of them not once. I would recommend to them the Reading of old Bishop *Latimer's* Sermons, and particularly this Remark, which I took down in my Pocket-book.

‘ While They controul in great Towns and
 ‘ about Court, who is it that controuls the
 ‘ Devil at home ? Whether They reside or not,
 ‘ the

' the Devil is not wanting on his Part, he is
 ' never unoccupied, he is ever in his Parish,
 ' he keeps Residence at all times, he ever ap-
 ' plies his Business, he is never idle, his Office
 ' is to hinder Religion — Oh that *Prelates*
 ' would be as diligent to sow the Corn of
 ' good Doctrine, as *Satan* is to sow Cockle
 ' and Darnel. — The Devil is no *unpreaching*
 ' Prelate, he is no *Lordly Loiterer* from his
 ' Cure, he still applies his Business; if
 ' you will not learn of God or good Men,
 ' learn Diligence in your Business even of the
 ' Devil, *ad Erubescientiam vestram dico*, I
 ' speak it to your Shame.' This indefensible
 Practice of *Non-Residence* must one time or
 other be of pernicious Consequence to Epif-
 copacy: The Church of *Rome* with all her
 Absurdities, all her Obligations to favour Ig-
 norance and Blindness could never swallow
 that monstrous Contradiction of *Non-Residence*.
 The Council of *Trent* (as I have read) decrees
 expressly that every Bishop who was six Months
 absent from his Bishopric, of what Title or
 Preeminence soever he shall be, he should
 forfeit a fourth Part of the Revenues of it, and
 if six Months more, another Fourth, and the
 Contumacy increasing, the Metropolitan was
 to inform the Pope against him that he might
 inflict some severe Punishment, or remove
 him from his Bishopric and place a better in
 his Room. What a miserable Case it is that
 a poor Clergyman, whose Family wants Bread
 at home, if he has any Business with his Bishop,
 must

must be obliged to run after him from one End of the Kingdom to the other, and be forced to beg his way home again?

E. There's no such Thing. The Bishop I assure you defrays every Farthing of the Expence out of his own Pocket, and gives his poor Brother something to buy a good Book with when he comes home.

D. So much the better; but we are rambled from the Subject; spare me a Word more, when Episcopacy was run down in the Civil Wars, a great Objection against the Bishops was, That they never *preached*. They were called the most opprobrious Names upon that Account, *Idle Shepherds, Blind Watchmen, Dumb*—I don't care to repeat the Distinctions and Characters bestowed upon them in those Times: I remember Mr. *Fiennes*, in his Speech upon that Occasion, says, that ' the Bishops
' neither can nor will preach; They cannot,
' because they are so entangled with the Affairs
' of this World; they will not, because their
' Dignities and Honours make them so stately
' that they think it not *Episcopal* to *preach*
' often. They are so fat and live so much at
' their Ease, that they are overrun with Idleness,
' and cannot bring their Minds to it.' I wish as well to the *Episcopal* Order as any Man in *England*, nor do I think it reasonable to argue against the Use of an Office from the Abuse of it, but I am sorry to say—

E. To say any thing to the Purpose you mean; why that *Fiennes* was a Rebel, a Republican,

publican, a Fanatic; he was condemned to be hang'd for the cowardly Surrender of *Bristol* to Prince *Rupert*. Have you no better Authority than this? Read on, read on.

D. What is meant by *duly Administring the Godly Discipline of God's Word*, as mentioned in this Prayer?

E. That Expression relates chiefly to the Censures of the Church, those dreadful and terrible Weapons that God has committed into the Hands of Bishops to punish and cut off notorious Offenders that cannot otherwise be reclaimed, to shut them out of the Pale of God's Fold, and to deliver them over to *Satan*, until by their Penitence and Submission they are qualified to be readmitted, and to be restored to the common Privileges of the *Christian Church*.

D. Is that *Godly Discipline* administred at this time according to the original Design of its Institution?

E. I hope so; the Offender I suppose, is cited before the *Bishop*, who sits in Consistory with his *Presbyters* about him, and takes immediate Cognizance of the Cause himself; There the Sinner is examined, reprov'd, admonish'd, threatened, and upon his continued Obstancy cast out of the Church. The Matter is not turned over to *Chancellors*, *Commissioners*, *Officials*, and a Parcel of hungry unhallowed *Lay-Officers* (who can pretend to no Relation to the Commission of *Christ* and his *Apostles*) to persecute and squeeze the poor Wretch,

Wretch, to torment him with cruel tedious and expensive Processés, and when they have racked him to Death, and ruined him in his Fortune, then at last to excommunicate him, and for any little Failure in the Form of their enslaving Proceedings to throw him out of all Spiritual and Civil Commerce and Society, to banish him as a Vagabond like *Cain*, and make him infamous to all about him; and as if this were not enough, to call for Help upon the Temporal Sword, to clap him up in a Goal, and let him rot in a Dungeon——This would be setting up an *Inquisition* with a Vengeance; from which and all other *Popish* Crafts and Cruelties, Good Lord deliver us. Do you think this was the Manner of *binding* and *loosing* intended by the Commission delivered by *Christ* to his *Apostles*, and by them to the *Bishops* their Successors in the Church? Can you imagine that the Sentence of such Judges is *ratified* in Heaven? that God will ever sign such dead Warrants as these? Can this be the Design of that Petition offered up by the *Archbishop* in the Office of *Consecration*, *Grant we beseech thee to this thy Servant such Grace that he may use the Authority given him not to Destruction but to Salvation, not to hurt, but to help?*

D. If the Bishop *himself* was to sit in Judgment, and to execute the Censures according to the Design of his Lord and Master, the *Sentence*, no doubt, would be dreadful and of fatal Effect, but when so many Excommunica-

publican, a Fanatic; he was condemned to be hang'd for the cowardly Surrender of *Bristol* to Prince *Rupert*. Have you no better Authority than this? Read on, read on.

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tions are thundred out and published in a *ludicrous* unedifying Manner for the most trifling Occasions, which the Bishop knows nothing of, when he never *hears* nor *sees* the Offender, nor takes the least Care of the Happiness of his Soul, but leaves that entirely to his Officers to be saved or damned, as the subtle unrighteous Forms of their *unscriptural* Proceedings (first invented for the Support of *Papal* Power, and spun out into a Sort of Trade by *Canon Lawyers*, the Spawn of *Poper*y) shall think fit to pronounce; to consign a poor Creature to eternal Flames for some pitiful Matter, to enjoin him Penance perhaps, and then for a *little Money* to loose him and let him go; if this be the *due Administring of Godly Discipline* according to this excellent *Prayer*, let the Consciences of those declare to whom it belongs. What a horrid Profaneness and Mockery of God it is to give it solemnly in Charge to a *Bishop elect* when he is consecrated *to exercise* Godly Discipline, *to be so merciful that he is not too remiss, and to minister Discipline that he forget not Mercy*. When at the same time he never knows any thing of the Offender, nor of the Cause — I could say much more, but it has been often said to no Purpose — This has been a continual Subject of Complaint from the *Reformation* to this Day; It remains still unredressed, and is a Grievance of so high a Nature; it is such a Perversion, such a Burlesque of the most solemn and tremendous Act of Church Authority,

Authority, that it hangs like a *Millstone* upon the Neck of Episcopacy, which I am afraid will one time or other sink it to the Bottom never to arise more.

E. God forbid; I hope Things will mend, don't be so hot. Come we'll go on: *He that desireth the Office of a Bishop desireth a good Work*; He desires the Office of a Bishop on purpose to enable him to promote the Interest of Piety, Virtue and Charity, and to do *more* good Works than he was capable of doing before.

D. Do Bishops desire the Office only for those excellent Ends? Have they no Worldly Prospects in view to advance themselves or their Families? Have they no Ambition to sit in Parliaments, or to appear in the Courts of Princes? Do they do *more* Good Works in Proportion to the Increase of their Revenue, and the Advantages of their Station?

E. Yes marry do they; and were it not for those worthy Ends they would be dragged by no Violence from their Studies in the Obscurity of a College, or the Privacy of a Country Parish; and as for their Families, if they have any Food and Raiment convenient for them, they leave the rest to Providence. Indeed, they have Preferments in their Gifts sufficient to support their Sons in a handsome Manner, but *Detur dignissimo* is the Word. If a Bishop's Son be the most learned Clergyman in the Diocese, as it generally happens under the Influence of Paternal Example, *Simili frondescit*

virga metallo, as the Poet sings; and if the Father upon a strict Examination finds him so, then indeed he will advance him perhaps to an Archdeaconry, or to a good Living; but what of that? He sends him out bare, and without Furniture, without giving him so much as a *little Sense*, or his Common-place-book, or one old Sermon, or the least Hint, or Division, or general Head, but leaves the poor young Man, who is not used to hard Labour, to work and sweat, and make it all out of his own Brain; in short, it is a cruel thing to be a Bishop's Son.

D. It is so at this rate, but one would think they might make some Allowance, and incline a little in Favour of their own Flesh and Blood.

E. No doubt, they have been often told so, but they will not bear the Thoughts of it; they will have no respect of Persons: If my Lady the Mother was to beg upon her bended Knees it would signify nothing; I do assure you when a Bishop examines his Son for Orders, he works him about the Pig-market; he asks him the hardest Questions, and puts him to the crabbidest Place in all the Book. And then for their Daughters—

D. I knew a Bishop that married his Daughters to Clergymen, and provided handsomely for them.

E. But how is that? If a Clergyman falls in love with a Bishop's Daughter (and indeed they are the most beautiful and accomplished young Ladies in the Kingdom) he knows he is to
expect

expect nothing from the Father but by his Merits; the Bishop tells him so beforehand. 'If you have a Mind to my Daughter, God bless you both together; but look for no Preferment from me upon that Account; my Favours are the Rewards of hard Study, of sound Principles and regular Behaviour; you must shine *sicut inter Stellae Luna minores*, to be distinguished by me. 'So that if you see the Son or Relation of a Bishop raised to the highest Preferments in the Church, you may depend upon it he is the most Learned and the best Preacher in all the Diocese. You'll find it a difficult Matter to prove the contrary.

D. Does a Bishop give his Daughters no Fortune in Money?

E. A very Trifle; besides his Blessing, and how can it be? what with Charity at home and Charity abroad, with endowing of *Hospitals*, and founding of *Exhibitions*, and buying Books in all the *Eastern* Languages to convert the *Jews* and *Arabians*, what can be saved? I think the *Natural* Piety and Virtue of a Bishop's Daughter is Portion sufficient and a competent Stock for a young Clergyman to begin with.

D. But I have heard that a Female Relation, or a Waiting-woman in a Bishop's Family is sometimes married to a Clergyman who has a Living given him upon that Account.

E. There is no such Thing; I defy the rankest Presbyterian to produce one Instance of it since the Reformation.

D. I

D. I hope then, they observe the same rigid Impartiality in preferring any Clergyman upon the strongest Recommendation from others?

E. They I do assure you; for between you and I, if the greatest King, or Prince, or Duke, or Earl in all the World recommends a Clergyman to a Bishop, he first examines him strictly in *Latin, Greek and Hebrew*, and if he catches him tripping he is rejected; there is no Regard to the greatest Power or the highest Title, he is sent away *Re infectâ*, with a *Flea* in his Ear, and makes as silly a Figure, as if he had been recommended by You or Me.

D. Good lack!

E. I tell you 'tis Merit only must do the Business; and to encourage Merit there is a most laudable Custom now universally followed by all the Governors of the Church, which is, to keep a constant Correspondence with the Heads of all the Colleges in both Universities; and when they find a poor Lad of promising Parts, and a good sober Behaviour, one of the Bishops, whose Turn it is, immediately adopts him for his own, makes him a handsome Allowance to live comfortably, sends for him at proper Times to his own Palace to have him under his Eye; there he directs him in the Method of his Studies, settles him in good Principles, and particularly in a Love and Veneration for the Doctrine and Discipline of the Established Church; and when he is qualified for Orders, he advances him gradually to the

the highest Dignities, and gives him the Preference to all Sons and Relations in the World.

D. But do not Bishops generally appoint one of their Relations to be their Secretaries or so?

E. Very rarely; their Way is to look out for some worthy Clergyman in their Diocese who is reduced to Misfortunes, or some young Student just in Orders; such a One they take into their Family, and allow him the small Perquisites of that Employment, and small enough they are, God knows: But if no such Person can be found, which scarce ever happens, then they will make use of a Nephew of shining Parts, or some distant Relation; and where's the mighty Harm of this?

D. None in the least.

E. Then, as for Pride and Ambition —

D. Have Bishops no Pride or Ambition?

E. No more than a sucking Child; and tho'tis well known that the Bishops in *England* are descended from the best and most ancient Families in the Kingdom, you never hear them talk of their Pedigrees, they are rather the more humble on that Account. One is the Son of Duke, another the Son of a — I tell you they are not like Mushrooms sprung up in a Night, or raised in a Minute like Puff-paste; they have no Occasion, like Upstarts in other Professions, to buy Coats of Arms at the *Herald's* Office: They and their Ladies have them by Descent; *Ab Avis et proavis, et Avi numerantur Avorum.*

D. Do

D. Do they not affect to make a Figure at Court?

E. Affect, afiddle; They had rather live in a Cell than undergo the Fatigue of Attendance at any Court in Christendom; but there they go to discharge a good Conscience; they are a sort of Protestant Confessors ready to solve all difficult Cases, to support the Weak, to comfort the Afflicted, to relieve the Distressed, to chear up the Poorspirited, to ease such as are troubled with evil Thoughts, to deliver such as are under strong Temptation. They have always before their Eyes that excellent Canon of the Council of *Sardis*. The Fathers of that Synod observing that Bishops used to go to Court upon By-ends, and private Designs of their own, ordained that no Bishop should go to Court unless immediately summon'd by the Emperor's Letters, or that their Assistance was required to right the Widows or Orphans, and to rescue them from the unjust Grasps of potent and merciless Oppressors. I'll tell you a Secret: If the greatest King or Peer in the World was known to live in any habitual Sin, they would not suffer the Sin upon him one Moment, they would reprove him to his Face, tho' they were all sure to perish in a Dungeon.

D. Well done Doctor; but do not Bishops delight to sit in the Parliament House?

E. They delight to serve their Country, if you will: There they sit *facere vota pro Republicâ*, to make *Prayers*, or *Vows*, or *Votes* for

for the Commonwealth, for so the Phrase may be translated; thus we read in *Horace*, *Voti compos*, a Man has a good *Vote*; *ex voto Vivitur*, when a Man lives according to his *Vote*; *nec voto vivitur uno*, when he keeps a good House by giving a double *Vote*. They sit in Parliament, *ne quid detrimenti capiat Ecclesia*, that the Church suffers no Wrong. And 'tis most comfortable to observe how they are all inspired with a wonderful Spirit of Concord and *Unanimity*; for they all *Pray*, or *Vow*, or *Vote* the same way, yet every one severally follows the Dictates of his Conscience, and *Votes* as the Merits of the Cause require. They act by a sort of divine Instinct, without any manner of Communication with one another. They are like the *seventy Interpreters* that translated the Old Testament into *Greek*, they were locked up separately in different Cells, yet they say, there was not a Syllable difference in their several Translations; so these *Interpreters* of Holy Writ, without speaking a Word to one another agree always in their *Prayers* or *Votes*, they rise up as one Man, they are of one Heart and of one Soul. Delight to sit in Parliaments? so far from it any more than their Duty obliges them, that they never concern themselves about the *Election* of Parliament Men in the Country where they live; they never offer to closet, to send circular Letters to influence or menace their Clergy, their Tenants or their Tradesmen, but leave them all to their Liberty to Vote as

D

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their Consciences direct, without Favour or Affection. They do not hurry their Servants abroad at all Hours, Night and Day, and make them scour about the Country on the Coach-Horses through thick and thin; or keep their Cellars open to make a Party, but every Man that belongs to them remains free and unbiassed according to Act of Parliament, and the established Liberty of the Subject, and fundamental Rights of the Constitution.

D. That's Glorious! but have Bishops no Pride?

E. Did you ever observe them to strut or swagger, or Puff out their Scarves? Do they spread open or display their silken shining *Cir-cingles* over their Cassocks? No, they wrap themselves close in their Holy Vestments, they walk softly with their Eyes downward upon the Ground, inwardly lamenting and bemoaning the flagrant Wickedness of a sinful Nation. You may be sure those thin lean Bodies, and Pale sad Countenances are the Effects of long Fasting, strong Crying and Tears, of hard Study, and continual Mortification.

D. I don't know what you mean by Pale Faces, but I have seen a Bishop with a Red Face before now.

E. And have you not seen Ladies with red Faces by drinking of too much Water?

D. But dear Doctor, are not Bishops exceedingly pleased to ride in Coaches?

E. What would you have those ride in who have almost crippled themselves by a studious seden-

sedentary Life, and their Limbs are benumb'd so that they are scarce able to walk? But then they always pull up the *Blinds*, for the Huzzas and Acclamations of the People would be troublesome to them if they were seen as they pass along; *Popularity* gives them Offence. O Mr. *Dobson*, give me leave, indulge me or my Heart will burst: There is something so peculiarly noble in a *Bishop's Lady* as she sits in her Coach, whether you observe the Beauty and Dignity of her Person, the Majesty of her Appearance, the Genteelness of her Dress, nothing of the *Dowdy* about her; with what Gracefulness she sits as if she was born for Greatness: O they are the Ornaments of their Sex, the Patterns of Politeness, Elegancy, and Decorum, the *Deliciae humani Generis*, raised on purpose by Providence to be the Nursing Mothers of the——Did you never observe a *Bishop's Lady* in her Coach at a *Mercer's* Door upon *Ludgate* Hill, how humbly she looks with her little Daughters, pretty Moppets! about her, teaching them to *Knot* and say their *Catechisms*? You might swear she was an *Episcopal* Gentlewoman without seeing the *Golden Mitre* on the Outside.

D. 'Tis wonderful I confess, but Doctor, let us go on: *A Bishop must be the Husband of one Wife*; no doubt of it, he ought not to have two at one Time.

E. Pray, Mr. *Dobson*, leave the expounding of Scripture to me, I think it is more my Province. This Injunction does not relate to

a Plurality of Wives, but 'tis as much as if one should say—what would you give to know?

D. Not much; but pray Doctor was there ever any such a Thing as a Bishop's committing Fornication?

E. No.

D. Nor Adultery?

E. No, never.

D. But did a Bishop never look upon a Woman to lust after her, and so commit Adultery with her in his Heart?

E. Yes, *Popish* Bishops in abundance: They all commit Adultery with the Whore of *Babylon*, and with other loose Hussy's, or they are much belied. But I never heard nor read of a *Protestant* Bishop's being a Whoremonger nor Adulterer, name one if you dare.

D. Nor Archbishop?

E. No.

D. Good lack! but do they never look upon a pretty Woman with Delight? Do they never drink Tea among the Ladies?

E. They look upon a fine Woman as you do upon a beautiful Horse, to admire the Works of the Creation, but without any manner of Concupiscence I assure you.

D. And then, they wear such huge broad-brim'd Hats on purpose to keep their Eyes from wandring upon strange Objects?

E. Well observ'd, they do so; and as for drinking Tea among the Ladies, they do it to have the better Opportunity to draw them off
from

from the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. They are ever meditating upon these *Verses*, which (as you may see in the *Office*) they sing when they are consecrated.

*Our Weakness strengthen and confirm,
(For, Lord, thou know'st us frail)
That neither Devil, World, nor Flesh
Against us may prevail.*

They do not spend their Time upon trifling Subjects, pinching of *Snuff*, admiring their *Ribbons*, or gallanting their *Fans*, but in explaining the *Catechism*, or expounding some difficult *Text*. O, 'tis a Heaven upon Earth, to sit at a Tea-Table with a Bishop, or, indeed, with a *Bishop's Lady*.

D. Do not some Bishops keep *Ladies* in their Houses, whom they call *Cousins*, or *Nieces*?

E. No, never; and in this they are truly primitive; for in the first Ages of the Church particular Care was taken, that no Bishop, under Penalty of being deposed, should entertain any Woman in his Family, either Relation, or Stranger, that so all Pretence, either of Temptation or Scandal might be cut off.

D. But, dear Doctor, may not a Bishop have wandering Thoughts?

E. Mr. *Dobson*, ask pertinent Questions: It is no jesting Matter, *Ludere cum Sacris*: You will ask me by and by, if Bishops do not go to *Plays*?

D. Now

D. Now you speak of that, I will not say that Bishops go to Plays, but I am sure some of them read Plays, and very smutty ones too. Pray, did not a Bishop publish some *Latin* Plays, *Terence's Comedies* ? I am sure there is Bawdy in some of them ; I have read them : *There's a plump juicy Girl, would make your Teeth water* : And then there's a Plot to debauch a Woman, by a Man that pretends to have no *Stones*. I thought a Bishop might find himself better Business than to recommend and explain such Stuff as that. I saw, lately an A———'s Name among a List of Subscribers to a Collection of old Plays, in which are Expressions so obscene, so filthy, lewd and impious.— Ah, Doctor, there are other *Sluts* in the World beside the Whore of *Babylon*.

E. I have a good mind to cite you into the Spiritual Court for Defamation : I see you observe no Bounds : I'll have no more to say to you : I renounce all Communication with you : Here am I taking all the Pains to edify and improve your Understanding, and you affront me to my Teeth : I will never darken your Doors again.

D. Pardon me, Reverend Sir, this one time ; don't, I beseech you, let me lose your learned Acquaintance. I beg you would bring good *Mrs. Evans* to eat a Bit of *roast Pig* with me to-morrow.

E. Have you broached the Barrel of *Ale* you told me of ? I am somewhat hasty, I
own ;

own; but, upon your Submission, I pass it by.

D. Do Bishops love their *Wives* as *Christ* loved his Church?

E. Yes, they do, and would lay down their Lives to save them.

D. Do Bishops (as the Office directs) *rule* their *Wives* well?

E. Yes; mighty well.

D. Is not a Bishop's Diocese said to be his *spiritual Wife*? How then comes he, for the sake of a richer Dower, to leave his *first Love*, and to give her a Bill of *Divorce*, and to marry himself to another Bishoprick?

E. The old *Presbyterian* Cant! A Bishop, you must know, is not married to any particular Diocese, but to the Church in general. I find you are nibbling about the *Translation* of Bishops; that Practice, I do assure you, is justified by the Use of the first and purest Ages, from the Apostles Days down to the Times we live in; it is *jure divino*, and may be proved by undeniable Authority. Do not you read expressly that *Enoch* was *translated*?

D. You have convinced me; and yet, notwithstanding this plain Proof, I have read somewhere of a Bishop of *Rockester* in former Days, one *Fisher*, who, when he was offer'd a *richer* Bishopric, was used to say, his Church was his *Wife*, and he would never part with her because she was *poor*.

E. He was a *Popish* Bishop; don't mind him; Foxes and Firebrands! *Papists* and *Presbyterians*!

byterians! all against the poor Church of *England!* God help her!

D. I remember now ; it was in *Collier's* Church History where I read that Saying of the Bishop's ; and the same Writer, in another Place, speaks something of the *Translation* of Bishops, I'll turn to the Index ; here it is ; let me see ; look here, Doctor, he says that “ it “ is decreed by the Apostles Canons, that it “ is not lawful for a Bishop to leave his own “ Diocese, and remove to another, without a “ justifiable Motive ; that is, unless he has a “ fair Prospect of doing *more Service* to the “ Church upon such a *Translation*. But even “ in this Case he is not to remove without “ strong Sollicitation, and by the Order of a “ great Number of Bishops. The Council of “ *Nice* says, if any Bishop quits his own See “ and settles in another, his Translation shall “ be *void*, and he shall be return'd to the Diocese to which he was at first consecrated. “ And the Council of *Sardica* complain'd “ that Covetousness and Ambition had brought “ an ill Custom upon the Church ; that it “ was too common a Practice for Bishops to “ remove from a less See to a greater, and “ that an Instance the other way was seldom “ or never to be met with ; from whence it “ was plain they were govern'd by Considerations of Interest.” Now, spare me a Question or two. Are Bishops *translated* merely because they can do the Church *more Service* in a *rich* Bishopric than a *poor* one? Do they deny

deny to be *translated* till they are press'd by the strongest Sollicitation? Do all the rest of Bishops go to him in a Body, and beg of him to be *translated*? Do they ever desire to be *translated* from a *rich* Bishopric to a *poor* one, because they may be able to do more Service to the Church?

E. All Forgery! *Popery*! Forgery! That *Collier* was a rank *Jacobite*! a *Nonjuror*! Give me my Hat and Gloves. That Book ought to be burnt by the Hangman. I won't stay a Moment, lest the Earth should open and swallow us up, and the House tumble about our Ears.

D. Patience, Reverend Sir, I only refer you to what I have read; you know I have often told you I was pretty near the upper End of *Paul's* School, and, though I may not talk so learnedly as you Gentlemen of the University, I have read a great deal of *English* History. But I am of your Opinion all the while; I think as well of Bishops as you do, and would go as far to serve them.

E. Say'st thou so! Give me thy Hand; then I'll fill the other Pipe. I tell you, once for all, that no Bishop would endure the Thoughts of being *translated*, unless he was sure it was for the Good of the Church; and what think you is the Reason that the same holy Man will be a *Bishop* of one Church, *Dean* of another, *Prebend* of another, hold a Living or two in *Commendam*, and take the Trouble of other Cures upon him, but only to qualify himself

E

to

to do the more Good in his Generation? and if they thought that other Clergymen would promote the Business of Charity and Religion in those Benefices, with an equal or superior Industry and Care, they would instantly renounce them all; but, alas! Mr. *Dobson*, the Harvest truly is great, but the Labourers are few, very few! Could they find Persons proper to receive them, they would soon resign their Pluralities; but when, upon strict Enquiry, no such are to be found, they keep them in their own Hands for those worthy and pious Purposes. Nay, they are so eager and resolute to advance those excellent Ends, that you will, sometimes, see a holy Man refuse, as it were, a *Bishopric*, unless he be, likewise, allow'd to be a *Dean*, a *Prebend* and a *Rector*, for fear the Duties of those Places should not be so properly executed, and their Revenues not conscientiously managed for the Good of Souls. I am well assured they do not save a Penny of the Profits into their own Pockets, but lay it out in the most useful and extensive Charities, to support poor *Vicars*; to supply the Wants of the inferior Clergy; to found Libraries in Market-Towns, *in usum Cleri*; to build Parsonage-Houses, that are now running into Decay all over *England*; to repair the Episcopal Palaces, especially in *Wales*; to relieve the Fatherless, and make the Widow's Heart to sing.

D. You were saying, Doctor, that the Bishops, sometimes, hold a Living or two in
Commendam,

Commendam, what is the Meaning of that Word?

E. Sir, I do not take upon me to be a regular *Doctor*, but only am call'd so by the Courtesy of *England*. Why, you must know, that, in some of the small Bishopricks, that do not exceed above five or six hundred, or a thousand Pounds a Year, (and what is that for the Representative of an *Apostle*?) there is, sometimes, a good Living annex'd, and, sometimes, the King (God bless him and his Royal House for ever!) is so gracious as to permit the holy Man to hold a Living, or a Dignity, which he had before, along with his Bishopric, to assist him to support the Character of his Function, to enable him to keep a better Table, and to enlarge his charitable Heart; and these good Designs, I dare say, are executed to a tittle; a very Trifle is laid up to make Provision for his Family; the Poor are his Pensioners, they are his Children.

D. But, how is it that the same holy Man should be the *Head* of a Church in one Diocese, and be a *Parish Priest*, and subject to another Bishop, in another ———; how such unbecoming Condescensions, such shifting of Scenes, such mean Sinking in their Characters, from being *Bishops* to become *Parochial Priests* in other Dioceses, how such a Practice, such an irregular kind of *Plurality* agrees with the Canons and Discipline of the Church, I could never yet be able to comprehend.

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E. What signifies it whether you can comprehend it or not? Will you deny the King's *Supremacy*? Pray, was not *Amos* a Prophet of the *Lord*, and, at the same time, one of the *Herdmen* of *Tekoa*?

D. Very true, Doctor; I am satisfy'd. Now, if you please, we'll go on a little farther. *A Bishop must be vigilant, sober, of good Behaviour, given to Hospitality.*

E. That is, He must be temperate, and not indulge the *rapacious* Cravings of his Stomach; he must keep a good *Look-out*, and be upon the Watch; and above all, and for the sake of all, support a generous and well-spread Table, to entertain Strangers, to receive his Clergy, and welcome his Neighbours; not that he is to make his House an Inn or a Tavern, open at all Hours, and free to all Comers.

D. I take you right. But how can they be said to keep up to this Precept of the Apostle, when not one in six of them lives in his own proper Diocese?

E. What of that? tho' they do not reside constantly in their Country Palaces because they are obliged to take care of the Church, and the King, and the Nation in Parliament, yet they provide that as plentiful a House be kept in their Absence as if they were themselves upon the Spot. They do not when they come away fasten up the Doors, and let the *Grass* grow in the Courtyard, but they leave

leave a regular Table behind them. There is a *Chaplain* to represent his Lordship, a *Steward* and proper Servants, and the *Bell* rings, and the *Cloth* is laid and sumptuously covered, where the Clergy, the neighbouring Gentry, and the Yoemanry are handsomly received, and their Horses put into the Stable and well rubbed down, and the Poor of the adjacent Villages are comfortably fed, and sent away with full Bellies, and sometimes with a Piece of Money in their Pocket besides; There the *Traveller* and the *Stranger* are welcome, at all times, to a Slice of Bread and a Cup of Ale; the People of the Country do not feel the Want of Monasteries and Religious Houses, which used to bestow their Alms and their Hospitality so liberally among them, as long as their Room is so well supply'd by the bountiful Distributions of the Bishop of the Diocese. — They remember faithfully the Question put to them, when they are *consecrated*.

Will you shew yourself gentle, and be merciful, for Christ's sake, to Poor and Needy, and to all Strangers destitute of Help?

Answer.

I will so shew myself, by God's Help.

And, then, when the Business of the Nation calls them to *London*, they do not, like some Members of Parliament, hide themselves in
obscure

obscure Corners, that their People do not know where to find them. They do not take private Lodgings, or hire little, pitiful Houses of two Rooms on a Floor, in dark Lanes or Alleys, but (if they have no Palaces in Town that belong to their See) they chuse the most open and public Streets, and the most spacious Houses, where they live nobly and magnificently, like Peers of the Realm; here their *Clergy*, when they come to Town, are welcome; here they are entertain'd at Bed and Board; here they have the Benefit of my Lord's *Library*, to employ themselves at leisure Hours; the poor young *Candidates* for Orders remain here, and are supply'd with every thing, till they are ordain'd; and the *Poor* are daily relieved by the Porter, in the great Court. You may easily know where a Bishop lives, by the Crowd of poor People in the Street before the Door, so that Passengers can scarce go along; it is really a Grievance to the Neighbours, they have hardly Room to go about their lawful Business, especially in *Christmas* time, when the Steward is delivering out the *Beef* and *Coals*, and fitting the elder Sort with their *grey Gowns*. To prove how unbounded is the Extent of *Prelatical* Charity, how soft and tender *Episcopal* Bowels are towards the Miseries of the Poor, do but look into the List of Benefactors for the Relief of the Sufferers by the Fire at *Crediton*. — O, Sir! when a Bishop goes to sleep with his Fathers; when he is taken from us by the Stroak of Death;

when

when he is hid from our Eyes, and is no more, what a Thunderclap is felt throughout the Nation! What running to the Churches and the Altars! What beating of Breasts, wringing of Hands, and disheveling of Hair, as in Times of national Calamity and Distress! *He is gone! He is gone! My Father! My Father!* The Chariot of *Israel*, and the Horsemen thereof! Then; then we find the Loss; *Virtutem incolumem odimus, sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.* Were he not like the *Golden Bough*, in the *Evangelical Poet*,

Primo avulso, non deficit alter Aureus;

We should be utterly inconsolable. — The Death of the great St. *Basil* strikes full upon my Memory. When that worthy Prelate lay a dying, the whole City came about him, not able to bear the Thoughts of his Departure; they pray'd as if they would lay hands upon his very Soul, and, by force, detain it in his Body; they were distracted with the Thoughts of so great a Loss. His Funeral was solemnized with all possible Testimonies of Love and honourable Attendance, and with the abundant Tears not only of *Christians*, but of *Jews* and *Heathens*. The Confluence was so great, that many were press'd to death in the Crowd, and sent to bear him company to his long Home. — An exact *Type* of the pious Times we live in! saving that not quite so many are trod to Death now as were formerly.

D. But,

D. But, Sir, I have often heard the *Clergy* complain, that when they have dined with the *Bishop*, and are coming away, they are forced to run the *Gantlope* through a Lane of impudent Footmen and Servants, who look upon them as the Devil over *Lincoln*, if every one does not give them a Shilling a-piece, when some of them have not one more in their Pockets. This is a great Hardship upon the poor Clergy, who pay dear for their Dinners. Where's the *Hospitality* of this Practice?

E. I don't believe a Word of it; I never gave a Bishop's Servant a Farthing in all my Life; not the Value of a *Pipe* of *Tobacco*.

D. Pray, Mr. *Evans*, who does *London-House* in *Aldersgate-Street* belong to?

E. Why, to the *Bishop* of *London*.

D. There are no such Doings in that Place as you talk of. No *Bishop* has resided there for many Years, nor any body to represent him. That ancient Building is all ruinous, and strangely perverted; it is let into scurvy Lodgings and Apartments; turn'd into Warehouses, Shops and Wine-Vaults, and made use of by a sort of Tenants that do small Reputation to the Fabrick or the Landlord. I believe the Bishop would call the Minister of a Parish to a strict Account, that should let out his Parsonage-House to such odd Uses, and suffer it to run to Ruin in such a dismal Manner. That venerable Pile, where so many Kings and Princes have been entertain'd, and sat in Council, so many learned and renown'd Prelates

lates, *Ridley, Bancroft, Sandys, King*, and many other great Reformers, and the Glory of their Times, lived with so much Honour and *Hospitality*, is now become a Nest of ———. Would a Christian believe, that one End of the Archbishop's Palace in *York* is converted to a *Dancing School*, and the other End into a *Play-House*? The Episcopal House at *Worcester*, and in many other Sees, is all in Ruins.—I do not suppose but large Sums have been received, from time to time, for *Dilapidations*; they look sharp enough after that. Pray, Sir, if such Monies are not honestly laid out, where lies the Remedy, or who must call the *Bishop* to Account? I have look'd into the *Codex*, and cannot find a Word upon this Subject.

E. Let me tell you, your Insinuation is vile and Atheistical. The inferior Clergy, if you will, look sharp, as you call it, after *Dilapidations*, and, perhaps, are too rigid and hard-hearted upon that Account; but the Right Reverend *Prelates* proceed, in that Respect, with all Tenderness and Humanity; they consider the Circumstances of the Family left behind, and are more likely to assist them out of the Revenues of the ensuing Year, than to harraß them with *Dilapidations*. Come, call a new Cause; read on.

D. A Bishop must be *apt to Teach*.

E. They must be qualify'd, by their Study of the Scriptures, and their great Skill in explaining them, to instruct and feed the Flock committed to their Charge. And how can

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they

they be otherwise, when the whole Business of their Lives has been to turn over and meditate upon those sacred Pages? when they have the Bible *ad unguem*, and have spent the choicest of their Time, their Breath and Strength in *Catechising*, in *Expounding* and *Preaching*? They unravel all difficult Places, all the Similies, Types, Parables, Examples, Allegories; they reconcile seeming Contradictions, and can repeat you all the parallel Texts from the Beginning to the End. They are no *obscure* Persons, that the World never heard of till they were call'd to the *Chair*; they are no *Novices*, or (as the old Translation has it) no *young Scholars*, lest they swell and fall into the Judgment of the evil Speaker; they are no *fresh Men*, no raw, unfledged, pen-feather'd Divines, but ripe and in full Plumage, the most staunch and celebrated Doctors of the first Class, the admired Orators and Preachers of the Age. They have taken their Degrees, regularly, in our Universities, where their Names will be immortal; they perform'd their Exercises with Applause, and the Schools rung with the Acclamations of the Audience; they preach'd *Latin* Sermons, read *Lectures*, were solid and acute in *Disputation*, famous for defending the primitive and pure Doctrines of Christianity, against *Atheists*, *Deists*, *Socinians*, *Papists*, *Fanatics*, *Enthusiasts*, *Methodists*, *Turks*, *Jews* and *Heathens*; their Doctrinal and Controversial Writings are admired and almost, adored all *Europe* over; their Sound is
gone

gone out into all Lands, and their Names, and their *Fames* too, unto the Ends of the World. How can they be but *apt to Teach*, when they have read over all the Expositors, the Commentators in all Languages, all the Doctors of the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches? There is not a Man of them, but may safely say of himself what the *Oxford Muse* so sweetly warbles:

*Notior at nulli vox est sua quam mihi
quicquid*

*Graius, Arabs, Italus, Chaldaeus, Hebraeus
et Assur,*

*Æthiopese sonant sacrum aut Memphitica
Coptos,*

*Is sum qui Latices ex ipso fonte petitos
Malim, quam longo circum diducere Rivo.*

*Hinc, ut me laudem, legi Targumque, Ma-
foramque,*

*Onkelon et Kimchi, quæ te vel nomina ter-
rent,*

*Commentatores Rabbinos, Kabbala quicquid
Implicuit nodis, cæcoque Enigmate texit.*

I was exercising my *Poetic* Fancy, sometime ago, in translating these Lines into *English* Verse; you know I have a pretty *Knack* at Poetry, though I do not make it my Profession; but,

Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori.

My Muse forbids the worthy Man to die.

I am glad I can repeat them ; for, I am sure
you will be pleased.

*There's no Man's Voice is to himself more
known*

*Than is to me the holy Religion
Of Grecian, Arabian and Italian,
Chaldaean, Hebræan and Assyrian,
What the Æthiopians teach, and what the
Copti,*

*I am the Man ; with Bucket and a Rope I
Chuse to draw Water from the Fountain-
Head,*

*Than from the wand'ring Streams the
Rivers shed ;*

*And tho' I praise myself I have read the
Targum,*

*The Masora, Onkelos and Kimchi's Targum,
Whose very Names wou'd fright thee and
the Devil into the Bargain,*

*The Rabbins Comments, and the Kabbala
That foldeth up its Meaning, I do say,
In twisted Knots and dark Ænigmata.*

What think you of that, my Boy ! But if you
chuse to have it rather in Scripture Phrase, it
will run thus : *Parthians* and *Medes*, and
Elamites, and the Dwellers in *Mesopotamia*,
and in *Judæa* and *Cappadocia*, in *Pontus* and
Asia, *Phrygia* and *Pamphylia*, in *Ægypt*
and in the Parts of *Lybia* about *Cyrene*, Stran-
gers of *Rome*, *Jews* and *Proselytes*, *Cretes*
and *Arabians*, we do all hear them speak in
our

our own Tongue the — The World would not be surprized to see a new Translation of the Bible from the present Bench of Bishops; there's not one of them but is capable to execute the Whole, had he but Time and — They can repeat you every Syllable of *More Nevoch, Medrasheoth, Pirke Avoth, Kether Malcuth*. — And yet to look them in the Face you would not think it; such is the seeming *Simplicity* of their venerable Aspects; but *Fronti nulla Fides* — O *Librorum Helluones*! O Gormandisers of Books! They have swallowed and digested all the *Fathers*, the *Codes*, *Provincials*, *Decretals*, *Pandects*, *Councils*, *Canons*; are Masters of all the *Schoolmen*, not to fill their Heads and stuff their Writings with *Quiddities* and *Quoddities*, and far-fetched unintelligible Distinctions, but to be able to reason closely, to argue solidly, to rebuke, to confute, to reply, to rejoind, to syllogize, to criticize, to apologize, to advertize, to sermonize, to decypherize, to —

D. Heyday! The Doctor is in a Rapture!

E. They pass to the *Episcopal* Chair through all the *lower* Ecclesiastical Offices; they do not, as a learned Writer observes, commence *Divines* and *Bishops* the same Moment; nor are they like the *Dragon's Teeth* that *Cadmus* sowed at *Thebes*, which immediately sprung up Giants out of the Earth armed *Cap-pee*, perfect Men and perfect Warriors in one Day — Look into the *Acta Eruditorum*,
there

there you will see their Names mentioned with Honour, and their worthy Labours recommended to Posterity.—O Mr. *Dobson*, could you but peep into a *Bishop's* Library, and see the Holy Man sitting in his *Purple Cap* and *Slippers*, with his Table covered with Books in all the learned Languages, and like *Julius Caesar*, dictating to two or three *Amanuenses* at the same time, and directing a Correspondence among the *Literati* over the known World—Their *Latin* is neat, chaste, elegant, and terse, and so is their *Welsh* — They are *Classical* to the Back-bone. The *British* Bishops are better known Abroad than they are at Home: But a Prophet has no Honour in his own Country — *Illustrissimi* Angliæ Præsules, *Doctissimi* Literarum Fautores Britanniae Episcopi, or *Indefatigabilissimi*, as they are called by the Learned *Siberians*. These and such are the Compellations used to our *Prelates* when they are addressed by *Foreigners*. —And then, as to that solemn Injunction of the *Archbishop* to the *Bishop* Elect.

Are you ready with all faithful Diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and Strange Doctrine and both privately and openly to call upon, and encourage others to do the same?

In this Case, I say, they are the *Mallei Haereticorum*, *Papistarum*, *Paganorum*, the *Mauls*, the *Beetles* and *Wedges* of *Heretics*,
Papists,

Papists, and *Infidels*; if a Blasphemous or wicked Book creeps out one or other of them soon cuts it to Pieces, to the utter Shame and Confusion of the Gainsayer. They have an Antidote ready to expell the Poison; they Pray against it, Preach against it, write against it, and encourage and sollicit their Clergy to do the same. Such Reverend Champions they favour and distinguish, and prefer them before all the Relations in the World. They buy and disperse their Books, they assist them in their Studies, and warm them in their Bosoms. They do not as the Great *Dons*, in other Professions, neglect, depreciate and brow-beat Writers of their own Order out of a Spirit of *Party*, or from a Principle of *Envy*, as if they obscured their own Characters, or — in short, *Heresy* and *Infidelity* never had fewer Friends and Followers than in these *blessed Times*, and all owing to the unwearied Industry and Vigilance of these Shepherds, these Watchmen of *Israel*. I'll tell you what, I was at Church in the City about three *Sundays* ago, where two great *Prelates* were in the same Pew, and at the repeating the *Athanasian* Creed, they both reverently stood up, and made their Responses aloud with their Eyes towards Heaven, to the great Comfort of myself and all the Congregation: Neither of them took *Snuff*, or *loll'd* Sauntringly over the Pew, or talked to any body near him all the While.

D. You

D. You have taken a deal of Pains to prove that the *Bishops* are a *learned* Body, which seems to be out of Dispute; for you see here in the *Office* before us, that the Bishop *Elect* shall be presented by two Bishops to the *Arch-bishop* of the Province in this Form.

Most Reverend Father in God, we present unto you this Godly and well learned Man to be ordained and Consecrated Bishop.

But I have a small Scruple upon me in this Matter; how do these two Bishops know that the Bishop *Elect* is *well learned*?

E. Do you think they give this Testimony of him by Hearsay, or by common Fame, for Favour or Affection? Can you suppose they would present him in that solemn Manner, in the Presence of God, and in the Face of all the Congregation, unless they could do it with a safe Conscience and from their own express Knowledge? No, no, they *examine* him strictly and severely in the *Polyglot*, I suppose, *Thesaurus Rerum Ecclesiasticarum*, *Liber Valorum*, and other godly Books; and finding him as learned as they expect, they justly bestow that Character upon him, they would be unjust if they did not; I believe the whole World would not prevail upon them to go against their firm Belief and Conviction in that Matter, even their Enemies themselves being Judges.

D. Who

D. Who doubts it? But admit that the Bishops are pick'd Men, well disciplin'd, and cull'd out of the Body of the Priesthood on account of their profound *Erudition*, yet if they be ever so *Learned* or so *apt to Teach*, you will allow I suppose that it is impossible they should *Teach* or feed their Flock unless they be able to *Teach* the People in a Language they *understand*.

E. I allow that, and what then?

D. Why then I should be glad to know how a Bishop of a Diocese in *Wales* is capable of doing his Duty with a good Conscience, when he does not understand one Syllable of the *Welsh Tongue* and the People don't understand a Word of *English*?

E. The Answer is plain, I deny your Supposition; you are to consider when an *eminent Divine* finds himself *improving* in Spiritual Knowledge, and *Spreading*, and *Stretching*, and *Thickning* and *Reaching* further, and *widening*, and *enlarging* his Capacities, and *budding* and *blossoming*, and growing *ripe*, and as it were *Maturus Episcopatu*, he then presently applies himself to the Study of the *Welsh Language* against the Time comes; this he finds a most easie and delightful Entertainment; for the *Welsh* is a Soft, Harmonious, and mellifluous Tongue, all *Music* and *Melody*, not thickned with *Consonants*, nor throttling you with *Gutturals*, it does not make your Tongue strike double against the Roof of your Mouth, or knock out your *Foreteeth*, or shake your *Grinders* like many of your *Northern*

thern Dialects. And then it has abundance of *Hebrew* Words intermixed, and so the holy Man being perfectly Master of the *Oriental*s before, finds it an easy Matter to attain the *Cambro britannic*. I verily believe that *Adam* spoke something of the *Welsh* Tongue in Paradise when he was talking to the *Brutes*; and it is my firm Opinion that every Bishop of a *Welsh* Diocese is qualified to instruct his Flock, to Preach and Pray in the Language of the Country; I am sure the last good Lord of *St. Davids* was, for he was a mighty *Decypherer* of Tongues. The Prelates of *Wales* must and do *Preach* and Pray in season and out of season, or else what do they do there? A Bishopric is as much or rather more a *Cure* of Souls than a Parsonage or Vicarage, and it would be strange they should cloath themselves with the Wooll, and take no Care of feeding the Flock; but to *Preach* or *Pray* to the People in an *unknown* Tongue would be *Popery*, downright *Popery*!

D. It would so; but not to urge this further at present, I cannot be altogether of your Opinion that the Bishops in *Wales* understand the Language of the Country, for I have a little Book in my *Library* (as you are pleased to call it) that gives a quite different Account of this Matter, and likewise of the *Hospitality* that is preserv'd (as you say) in the Palaces of *Bishops* of that Country, either when they do or do not reside in their Dioceses. You know the Bishopric of *St. Davids*?

E. I had the Honour to be born in that
Diocese

Diocese; It is a See of a very large Extent, and takes in the Counties of *Pembroke, Caermarthen, Cardigan, Brecon*, and all *Radnor* except six Parishes, a considerable part of *Glamorganshire*, and many Parishes in the Counties of *Hereford* and *Monmouth*; O 'tis a curious fine Bishopric.

D. The Book I spoke of is called *A View of the State of Religion in the Diocese of St. Davids*; it was written by a *Doctor of Divinity* in that Principality, and his Observations are founded upon his own Knowledge; Here is such a Scene of Misery and Distress, of Barbarism and Barbarity, such scandalous Abuse of Discipline and Church Power! But 'tis no wonder, for a *Welsh* Bishopric is commonly no more than a *Stopgap*, an *Earnest* of higher Promotions; you seldom find a Bishop die in Possession of a See in that Country, they hope not to continue there long, they have no time, if they had an Inclination, to make themselves acquainted with their *Clergy* or their People; some never go there at all, and others but once or so to take Possession, to settle their Rents and receive their Presents, they go in Snug and so they go out, they keep their own Counsel, their Houses are tumbling down, and so there is no Pretence for Residence, one succeeds another and takes things as he finds them, *Alter et idem!* The Country lies in a remote Corner of the Island not much frequented or inquired after; the Gentry and People of Fashion make no Complaint, they enjoy their Impropriations, and generally live in *London* and spend their

Money there, or in other places at a Distance, and don't regard how the Livings are served, how the People are Taught, and how the *Clergy* are starved; but I will reach the Book, here it is, I remark'd some particular Passages that made my Heart bleed — and first Doctor for your *Hospitality* in the Bishop's Palace at *St. David's*.

E. I never was at *St. David's* but I have been received with great *Hospitality*, and drunk very good *Ale* at the Palace of *Abergwyly*.

D. To begin then; ' *St. David's*, once a
' celebrated Seat of Learning, and an *Alma*
' *Mater* of the Muses, once the happy Abode as
' of our *Archbishops* and *Bishops*, so of our
' *Archdeacons*, *Canons* and *Prebendaries*, who
' were encouraged and thought themselves
' obliged to maintain the Honour of Religion
' to attend the Service of their Church, to re-
' pair their Fabric and their Houses *creditably*,
' to spend the rest of their Revenues in *Hos-*
' *pitality* and *Charity*, in kindly welcoming
' and entertaining pious Visitors and Strangers
' and relieving the Poor as liberally. These
' were the good laudable Practices of the an-
' cient Times: But alas! what an amazing
' Change has now befallen us; the College of
' our Students is long since dissolved, a great
' part of our sacred and most ancient *Cathe-*
' *dral* is in Rubbage, and of the *Bishops Pa-*
' *lace* there is nothing to be seen but *stately*
' *Ruins*, and almost all the Habitations of our
' Dignitaries demolished, so that they have in a
' Manner left us and consequently *Hospitality*
' and

' and *Charity* are gone away too, and the
 ' Marks of forsaken Poverty and Desolation
 ' seem to overspread the whole Neighbour-
 ' hood; there remains scarce any thing beside
 ' poor Lodgings for the Chapter to keep their
 ' *Audit* for a Week or Fortnight at St. James's
 ' *Tide*, and then we are to hope for the Plea-
 ' sure of seeing them no more till the next
 ' Season comes again.' That is as much as to
 say, that they come once a Year to receive their
 Money, and the Church, and the Palace, and
 the Cathedral, and the Service, *Hospitality*
 and *Charity* may go ——— The Poor con-
 tinue Naked, Miserable, and unrelieved, The
 Revenue is carried away to *London* and other
 Places, none of it is scattered upon the Ground
 from whence it came, it is consumed in other
 Dioceses among Forigners commonly in a
slovenly ungenteel riotous way of living, or an
awkward Affectation of Greatness; for few
 of those sort of *Clergy* die worth a Shilling,
 but leave their Families in the utmost Misery
 and Distress; as they are generally Vain, Igno-
 rant, and Haughty, so they are Expensive, Prodi-
 gal, and Wasteful. They swagger among the little
 Curates, and the gaping Clowns in the Country,
 under the Title of Mr. *Dean*, Mr. *Archdeacon*;
 with this Distinction they strut in a *Title Page*
 if they chance to write a *Silly Pamphlet* or
 print a *Stolen Sermon*, but as for the Functions
 of their Office, to visit their Jurisdictions, and
 regulate the Disorders of it; *Gallio* cares for
 none of these Things. And the Case I am
 afraid

afraid is much the same in all the other Bishoprics of the Principality.

E. Go on, have you any more? I shall come over you by and by.

D. Truly I have much more than I could wish. The same pious Regard observed in supporting Hospitality in the Palace of the *Bishop*, appears notoriously in keeping up the *Houses* of the *Parochial Clergy*, and providing them Habitations comfortable and proper for their Residence and Abode; the Case, in short, is this. ‘ Did you but see what very sorry and
‘ mean Cottages (if any) that are left for *Par-*
‘ *sonage* and *Vicarage* Houses? In most Parish-
‘ es there are no Provisions of any kind for
‘ that Use, no Glebe, no Ground to build upon,
‘ but where there are any, they are common-
‘ ly so mean and inconvenient, as that the
‘ Clergy, poor as they are, cannot think them
‘ habitable for themselves, and therefore are
‘ obliged to part with them to any one that
‘ will please to rent them; but very often
‘ they fall to the *Sextons* lot, who to get a
‘ sorry Maintenance is allowed the Privilege
‘ of selling *Ale* by the Church-yard Side.’

E. How can this be, when to my Knowledge there be so many *Rocks* and *Stones* in that Country ready at Hand? When the *Archdeacons* of the Diocese and the *Rural Deans* who are Officers under them, are solemnly appointed to visit the Houses of the Clergy, and to order the repairing of them, that they may be kept in Order and not be suffered to

run to ruin. The Bishops have Authority to compel the *Impropriator* to find a suitable Habitation for his Curate, as well as to provide him a comfortable Maintenance; the *Archdeacon* is *alter Oculus Episcopi*, as the *Dean* is the other; he is one of the *Eyes* of the Bishop, and his Jurisdiction extends chiefly to these Affairs; if the House of the Minister be out of repair, the Churchwardens are obliged to present it at the Visitation, and the *Archdeacon* is bound to take Cognizance of it, and to provide against it.

D. What signifies where the Power is lodged, if it be never executed? The Archdeacons do not *reside*, though they are obliged to Residence by Law; and the Bishops take no Care to compel them to it. *Watson* in his *Compleat Incumbent* (which I bought when I was *Churchwarden*) says expressly, if an *Archdeacon* be wilfully absent from his Dignity for the Space of a *Month* together, or for the Space of *two Months*, to be accounted at several times in the Space of one Year, and for such a Time resides in any other Place, he shall for every such Default forfeit *ten Pounds*. What Havock would the Execution of this Law make among the *Welsh* Archdeacons, and among many of the *English* ones too? What Advantages would accrue to Religion, what scandalous Imputations would be silenced by the constant enforcing of it? It is their Duty to visit two Years in three, yet if they chance to come into the Diocese at all, they

they do not hold their *Visitations* in any regular Manner, so that neither Clergy nor People know when, or where, or how to apply. An *Archdeacon* may be one of the *Eyes* of the Bishop, yet that Officer must have a very strong Sight to see from *Highgate*, into *Cardiganshire*. And then to help the Matter, the Bishop, who seldom *resides at all*, sometimes holds an *Archdeaconry* or two along with his Bishopric, and so deprives the Church of that useful Officer, when there are many valuable Clergymen in the Diocese (notwithstanding the Poverty and Distress of most of them) who are well qualified to fill the Place and discharge the Duties of it. The Bishop of *Bangor* (I think) is Archdeacon of *Bangor* and Archdeacon of *Anglesey*; the Bishop of *St. Asaph*, is Archdeacon likewise of *St. Asaph*; what a monstrous Thing is this? What a strange Accumulation of Preferments in their own Natures utterly inconsistent and untenable, and of the most fatal Tendency to the Discipline and good Order of the Diocese, the Clergy and People? If they appoint Archdeacons they do not oblige them to *reside*, or hold their *Visitations* as the Law requires; and if they are Archdeacons themselves, it is impossible they should do their Duty in that *Office*, when, as they are Bishops they do not live in their Diocese, and consequently cannot be absent as Bishops and present as Archdeacons at the same Time; and yet *Watson* declares it for Law, that though a Bishop perhaps be not tied

ried to Residence by the Statute of the 21st of H. VIII. yet he is thereto obliged by the *Ecclesiastical Law*, and may be compelled to keep Residence by *Ecclesiastical Censures*. And if a Bishop hold in *Commendam* an *Archdeaconry*, *Deanery*, or like inferior Dignity, Parsonage or Vicarage, with his Bishopric, he is punishable by the same Statute, if according to the same he be not resident upon such Dignity, Parsonage or Vicarage, and that though he be constantly resident upon his Bishopric, he shall not be excused thereby. But the Difficulty is, how to put these Laws properly in Execution. The Bishops dispense with the Residence of their Archdeacons, and it would be strange they should insist upon it, when they make so light a Matter of dispensing with their own; but (as the Poet sweetly warbles) *Defendit numerus junctæque Umbone Phalanges*.

E. Is the Man mad? What a terrible Thing would it be to see a Bishop *excommunicated* by his Metropolitan for *Non-residence*?

D. I can't help that. And now I am upon this Subject, I must take notice that the Bishops conscious of their own Neglect of *Residence*, are obliged as it were to dispense with the *Residence* of those Parochial Clergy, whose Livings are *sufficient* to afford them a handsome and comfortable Maintenance; for tho' many Churches are stript of their Revenues in a deplorable Manner, yet some of them (I have heard) do still enjoy their *full Endowments*,

H

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H

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afford Provision for the Incumbents whereby they may live reputably upon the Spot, and do good Service to Religion, and support their Character with Credit and Honour. But these Sort of Clergy leave their Flocks to wretched miserable *Hirelings*, and run out of the Country into a *warmer Sun*, and hunt after Preferments generally in *London*; there they creep into *Curacies* and little *Lectures* (and their Modesty will sometimes raise them into a paltry Popular *Chaplainship*) where their broken and unintelligible *English*, and their squeaking *Welsh* Dialect give great Offence to all serious and devout Christians, and administer Mirth and Mockery to *giggling Girls* and *young Fellows*, who make their *Reading* and *Preaching* and even their common Conversation a Matter of Sport and Ridicule.

E. What's that you say Sir? Don't I speak as proper *English* as any of you all, though I would not forget my *Welsh* for all your linsy woofsey mungrel *Gibberish*?

D. You, Sir, have had the Advantage of a good Education; your Language is polished by keeping the best of Company, you dine once a Year with the Doctor of the Parish, your Accent is softned by your frequent speaking in Public. I have heard you Preach at St. *Antholin's* in the Morning with the general Applause of that elegant and distinguishing Assembly. — You shall now see what Regard is had by these *Spiritual Governors* to the *Decency* and *Convenience* of divine Worship, by taking a short Survey of the miserable and ruinous Condition

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reby tion of the *Parochial Churches* in that Coun-
 and try. ' Some Churches are totally neglected,
 their ' and very rarely if at all have any Service per-
 these ' formed in them, and which if they are not
 ched ' converted to *Barns* and *Stables*, do only
 oun- ' serve for the solitary Habitations of *Owls*,
 Pre- ' and *Jackdaws*. In some Places we have
 creep ' *Churches* without *Chancels*, in others we
 their ' have but some piece of a Church, that is,
 a pal- ' one End or a *Side Isle*, and the desolate
 oken ' Appearance of most of those that are yet
 weak- ' standing, speak how difficult they Subsist,
 ll se- ' and how miserably they are neglected. In
 nister ' some not only the Bells are taken away, but
 and ' the *Towers* are demolished, and in many
 g and ' others there are scarce any Seats except here
 versa- ' and there a few ill contrived and broken
 ' *Stools* and *Benches*; their little *Windows*
 speak ' are without *Glass*, and darkned with Boards,
 ough ' *Matts*, or *Lettices*; their *Roofs* decaying,
 r lin- ' tottering, and leaky; their *Walls* green,
 ' mouldy, and nauseous, and very often with-
 e of a ' out Wash or Plaister; and their *Floors* ridg-
 ed by ' ed up with *noisome Graves* without any
 once ' Pavement, and only covered with a few
 ccent ' *Rushes*. Did you see so many *Parochial*
 ublic ' Churches and Chapels of the Bishops Pala-
 e in a ' ces, and of almost all the Parsonage Houses
 f tha ' in the Diocese; it might well tempt you to
 - You ' think that we had lain in the Road of the
 thes- ' *Turks* and *Saracens*, in some of their wild Ex-
 Con- ' cursions, or that we had but very lately passed
 shor- ' the Diligence and Reformation of an *Oli-*

‘ *verian Army*’. Such are the blessed Effects of the due *Administation* of *Godly Discipline* in that Country! Such—

E. What is the Man talking of? I don’t say our Churches in *Wales* are as fine as yours in *London*; and adorned with *Pictures* and *Paintings*, and God knows what; it is not the *Walls*, or the *Bells*, or the *Pews*, that make a *Church*. Don’t you read that *Moses* made the Altar of Burnt Offering of *Earth* and rough *unhewn Stones*? Our Churches are built of the very same; there’s a great deal of *Plainness* and *Simplicity* in them, nothing to draw the Eyes of the Congregation into *Superstition* and *Idolatry*.

D. You are right; you shall next see what *Simple* Sort of Clergy are appointed in these *Simple Churches*, as you call them. You came somewhat young out of the Country, and therefore it may be a Curiosity to hear the Description of a *Welsh Curate*. ‘ In some
‘ Places the *Christian* Service is totally dis-
‘ used, there are other some that may be said
‘ to be but half served; there being several
‘ Churches where we are but rarely, if at all, to
‘ meet with *Preaching*, *Catechising*, or admi-
‘ nistring the *Holy Communion*. In others the
‘ Service of the Prayers is but *partly* read, and
‘ that perhaps but once a *Month*, or once in
‘ a *quarter* of a Year; nor is it indeed reason-
‘ able to expect that they should be better serv-
‘ ed, while the Stipends allowed for the Ser-
‘ vice of them, are so small, that a poor Cu-
‘ rate

' rate must sometimes submit to serve *three* or
 ' *four* Churches for *ten* or *twelve* Pounds a
 ' Year, and that perhaps when they are almost
 ' as many Miles distant from each other. And
 ' when it is thus with them, with what Or-
 ' der or Regularity are they capable of doing
 ' that Service? And having so little Time, and
 ' so many Places to attend upon, how pre-
 ' cipitately and as if out of Breath, are they
 ' obliged to read the Prayers, or to shorten
 ' and abridge them? And what time have
 ' they or their Congregation to compose
 ' themselves for their Devotion, while thus
 ' forced to a kind of perpetual Motion, and
 ' like hasty Itinerants, to hurry from Place to
 ' Place? There is no Time fixed to go to
 ' Church, so it be on Sunday; so that the
 ' poor Man must begin at any Time with as
 ' many as are at hand, sooner or later, as he
 ' can perform his *Round*. He then abruptly
 ' huddles over as many Prayers as may be in
 ' half an Hours time, and then returns again
 ' to his Road fasting, till he has dispatched
 ' his Circuit, and that Weariness or Dark-
 ' ness obliges him to rest, or perhaps for want
 ' of a little necessary Refreshment at Home,
 ' to go where he ought not, where it's odds
 ' but he will meet with many of his Congre-
 ' gation; who, when their short Service is
 ' over, are too apt to think themselves at Li-
 ' berty to spend the remaining Part of the
 ' Day at an *Alehouse*, or at some Pastime or
 ' Diversion, as they are disposed. What *Ho-
 spitality*

‘ *Spitality* to Neighbours, or to Strangers, or
 ‘ Charity to the Poor can they afford to give,
 ‘ who are themselves so very indigent as to be
 ‘ most in need of *Charity*? How conformable
 ‘ to the Canons in their *Dress* and *Habits*,
 ‘ such as are required and becoming of their
 ‘ Orders, *viz.* in their *Gowns* and *Cassocks*
 ‘ are they capable of appearing when their
 ‘ mean Salaries will scarce afford them *Shoes*
 ‘ and *Stockings*? It seems they *literally*
 obey the Evangelical Precept: They provide
 neither *Gold* nor *Silver*, nor *Scrip* for their
 Journey, neither *two Coats*, neither *Shoes*;
 Alas! they have scarce Cloaths to cover their
 Nakedness; whence comes the common
 Proverb, *As ragged as a Welsh Curate*.
 Would not any Man of Sense and common
 Piety stand amazed, how such Wretches could
 ever get into *Orders*? How a *Bishop* could
 devote such ignorant poor Creatures to mi-
 nister in Holy Things? What a Sort of *Ex-*
amination must pass upon them before they
 are ordained? A *Bishop* is commanded to lay
 Hands *suddenly* on no Man, without a strict
 Inquiry into his Life and Abilities; but sure-
 ly he could not upon the least *Deliberation*
 lay Hands upon such Itinerant *Vagabond* Hire-
 lings as these. But so it is, and with a good
 Conscience no doubt — And now, as this
 worthy Writer observes, ‘ What Christian
 ‘ Knowledge, what Sense of Piety, what Va-
 ‘ lue for Religion are we reasonably to hope for
 ‘ in a Country thus abandoned, when Persons

‘ are

are ordained that are contemptible in themselves, when any little *A-b-c darian School-master*, a Gentleman's *Butler*, a *Mountebank*, or what not, shall be so cheaply admitted to commence *Clerks*, on the prevailing Merit only, perhaps, of some potent *Impropiator's* Recommendation, who may be Sollicitous for a *cheap Chaplain*, or to pack off an *useless Servant*.

What is the Meaning of that *solemn Charge* given by the *Bishop* to the *Archdeacon* when he presents a Person to be *ordained* either *Deacon* or *Priest*?

The Bishop.

Take heed that the Person whom you present unto us be apt and meet for his Learning, and godly Conversation, to exercise his Ministry duly to the Honour of God and the Edification of his Church.

The Archdeacon shall Answer.

I have enquired of him, and also examined him, and think him so to be.

What is the Intention of the *Answer* given by the *Bishop Elect* to the *Archbishop*, when he is *consecrated*?

Will you be faithful in ordaining, sending, or laying hands upon others?

Answer.

Answer.

I will do so by the Help of God.

How does he *do so* when he *ordains* such Fellows who are scandalously illiterate, and are incapable in any Sense to do *Honour* to God, or to *edify* his Church?

When I reflect upon these Things I am utterly confounded, they can never be reconciled. I shall say no more, than that all these Miseries, all these Prophanations and Scandals it is in the Power of the *Bishop* and his Officers in a great Measure to remedy and suppress; there are Laws to support them in the Execution of their Duty, the Consequences must therefore lie at their own Doors.

E. Between you and I, Mr. *Dobson*, I am afraid this is too true; but I beg of you for the Love of God and out of Respect to the *Cloth*, that you would not say so much Abroad; O tell it not in *Gath*!

D. I am come now to that absurd and indefensible Practice of Holy Men (as you call them) who accept of Bishoprics in *Wales* when they are utterly and in any Sense incapable of doing their Duty, because they do not *understand the Language* of the People they are to instruct; How can they (as the Office of Consecration enjoins) *feed* the Flock over which the *Holy Ghost* hath made them Overseers, and for which *Christ* died, how can the Sheep know the

the Shepherd's *Voice*, when they do not know the Meaning of one *Syllable* he says? With what Reverence and Complacency must they receive his *Benediction* when he *blesse*s them in an *unknown Tongue*? To see a Bishop lay his *Hand* upon a Person's Head, and mutter a few Words over him *not to be understood*, looks more like a *Charm* than a *Blessing*. In the Office of *Consecration* God Almighty is addressed to endue the *Bishop Elect* with his *Holy Spirit* that He *Preaching* the Word may not only be earnest to *reprove, beseech* and *rebuke* with all Patience and *Doctrine*, but also may be to such as believe, a *Wholesome Example* in Word and *Conversation*, &c. But what a Scene is this when he is appointed over the Souls of People to whom he cannot speak a Word *to be understood*, and is utterly incapable to *reprove, beseech, or rebuke*, or to hold any manner of *Conversation* with them? What is the Meaning of this *solemn* Question and Answer, much too solemn to be used only for *Form*?

The Archbishop.

Will you instruct the People committed to your Charge (which shews a Bishopric is a Cure of Souls) and call upon God for the true Understanding of the Scriptures, so as ye may be able by them to Preach and Exhort with wholesome Doctrine, and to withstand and convince the Gain-sayers?

I

Answer.

Answer.

I will do so by the Help of God.

How can he *Teach*, and *Preach*, and *Exhort* with wholesome Doctrine and instruct the People, *withstand* and *convince* the Gain-fayers in his Diocese, when the People perhaps never once saw the Face of him, or if they had, he may as well Talk to them in *Arabic* and be as well Understood? For God's Sake have not Bishops *Souls* to be saved? Is Religion a Thing *real* or is it *Priestcraft* and *Juggling* and a *Trade* to live by? Is this *Office* no more than Playing of a *Farce* or acting of a *Droll*? Is God the sure *Avenger* of Breaches of Promise and Trust made and published in his own most sacred *Name*? What can the People think, or what Respect can they entertain of their Pastors when——. But this *honest Writer* represents the Case in a much better Light; tho' he speaks with great Wariness and Caution (for the Subject it seems is exceeding *Tender*) yet he says enough to expose and explode so unjustifiable a Custom, so opposite to common Sense, and which can admit no Gloss or Shadow of Reason to recommend it.

E. I wish you had done with your *Book*; for my Time is almost come, I expect the *Clerk* every Moment.

D. ' The disposing of *Welsh* Preferments
 ' to such as are wholly ignorant of the Lan-
 ' guage, has contributed not a little to the *De-*
 ' cay

cay and *Desolation* of our Religion. The
 Benefits of the *Church* should be accepted
 for no other End but of being *useful* and do-
 ing the Service of the *Church* whose *Bread*
 they Eat; it being Just and Equitable that they
 should be qualified for the *Duty* where they
 receive the *Profit*; and it can't be supposed
 that they are so till they make themselves in-
 telligible to the Flocks they are to guide and
 oversee. For as St. *Paul* observes *when the*
Voice of him that Speaketh is not Under-
stood, then both he that speaks and he that
is spoken to are mutually Barbarians to each
other; and a greater yet infinitely than St.
Paul hath told us, that it ought to go into
 the Character of a *good Shepherd* that the
 Sheep should know his *Voice*; which plainly
 enough signifies that no one can be said to
 be an useful and *good Pastor* whose *Speech*
 or *Voice* is *unintelligible* to his *People*.
 The Reason of the Thing is so clear and
 unanswerable, as that it is in Truth amazing,
 that *Ambition* itself with all its subtle Inven-
 tions should think to find out Arguments to
 justify the contrary; for of what Use can any
 one be (let his *Learning* in other Respects
 be ever so great) to *instruct* and *teach* those
 whom he cannot *speak* to? And therefore
 what Benefit are the People to expect as to
 Knowledge or Information from the Ministry
 of such who can neither *Preach* nor *Pray*
 so as to be *understood* by them? Will after
 Ages believe that there should arise among

‘ the Learned and the Knowing those who
 ‘ should not doubt of their Sufficiency for, or
 ‘ of their Faithfulness in, the Discharge of this
 ‘ most *solemn Trust*, without either *Under-*
 ‘ *standing* the Language or ever *seeing the*
 ‘ *Faces* of those they are spiritually to *Feed*
 ‘ and *Oversee*? While Things continue thus,
 ‘ with what kind of Decency can we declaim
 ‘ against the *Popish* Practice of *Teaching* Men
 ‘ it is neither necessary they should *Read* the
 ‘ Scriptures nor *Understand* the Prayers, when
 ‘ what amounts to so much the same Thing,
 ‘ and is so like it, is Practised and Allowed
 ‘ among ourselves by assigning *Pastors* that
 ‘ are *Unintelligible* to their Congregation?

E. On my Word your Author speaks good
 Sense, his Observations are just; And what-
 ever has been the Practice of late in filling
 the *Welsh* Bishoprics with Pastors that are
Strangers to the Language, yet that the Case
 was otherwise formerly, appears by an Act
 passed in the Reign of *Charles* the Second,
 which enjoins that the Bishops of *Hereford*,
St. Davids, *Asaph*, *Bangor*, and *Landaff*,
 and their *Successors* shall take such Order
 among themselves for the Soul's Health of the
 Flock committed to their Charge, that the
Liturgy of the Church of *England* be *truly*
 and *exactly* Translated into the *British* or *Welsh*
 Tongue, and the same so Translated, and by
 them or any three of them at least, *viewed*,
perused, and *allowed*, be Imprinted, and the
 whole Divine Service be used and said by the
 Ministers

Ministers and Curates throughout all *Wales* in the *British* or *Welsh* Tongue; and therefore it is, that if a Clerk be presented to a Church in *Wales* who does not *understand* the Language, the Ordinary may lawfully *refuse* him, because he is *Incapable* of the Cure.

D. It is certain by the *Act* you mention that *Bishops* were in those Days appointed to the *Welsh* Sees who perfectly *understood* the Language; for to what purpose were they ordered to *view* and *peruse* the Translation of the *Liturgy*, if they were not able to *understand* it? Their *Successors*, by this *Act*, are likewise supposed to be capable from Time to Time to *view* and *peruse* and See the Liturgy Inprinted in *Welsh*; and how sufficient the present *Sett* are to Discharge or Attend such a Business may be easily conjectured when I believe not one of them can Read or Understand one Sentence in the whole Book. I find there is a Design at present to Publish a large Impression of *Welsh* Bibles under the *Direction* of the *Bishops* of the Principality; Tenderly Expressed! I should be glad to know which of them *Peruses* the Sheets, or Corrects the Press? How Shocking is it to consider that the Bible, on which the Salvation of so many Thousands depends, should be left to the Mercy of a Hackney Translator, to add, to omit, or alter what Doctrines he pleases? What Havock may be made with the Article of the *Trinity* at this rate? And then, with regard to the Power they have by Law to refuse a *Clerk* who

who does not *Understand* the *Welsh* Tongue, and to keep him out of the Diocese, and to secure by that Means that the Divine Service might be perform'd in the Language of the Country, they are so far from exercising this Authority, wherein Religion and the Good of Souls are so nearly concerned, that they frequently present to Livings in their own Gift and admit by the Presentation of others such *Clerks* as are *Englishmen*, and sometimes *Refugees* of other *Countries*, who cannot speak *one Syllable*, and understand as little of the Language as themselves.

E. What Think you of Dr. *Trevor* the Bishop of St. *David's*? There are many Families of the *Trevors* in *Wales*.

D. That may be; but let me go on with my Book; I have almost done. ' The eminently pious Bishop BEDEL, when he was promoted to an *Irish* See, thought himself obliged to *learn* that Language, to which he so applied himself, as to be so great a Master of it and such a Critic as to correct a Translation which he ordered to be made of the *Old Testament* into *Irish*, in order to be join'd with the *New* and the *Common Prayer* which were done before. Having given this Example in his own Person he with the more Authority could require his *Clergy*, as he accordingly did, to conform themselves unto it; he therefore plainly told them that such only he would encourage and prefer there, who could *officiate* and *preach* in the *Irish Language*, which was, he said,
' a Qua-

‘ a Qualification *absolutely necessary* in every
 ‘ Minister that had the Care of an *Irish* Con-
 ‘ gregation.

‘ It was upon the same View, that is, of
 ‘ being as useful as possible in his Diocese,
 ‘ that the late most *Learned* and *Pious* Bishop
 ‘ *Lloyd* of *Worcester*, on his Promotion to the
 ‘ Bishopric of *St. Asaph*, thought it his *Duty*
 ‘ also to *learn* the Language of the Country,
 ‘ so far at least as to be able to *read* it, to *ad-*
 ‘ *minister* the Sacraments, to *confirm* them,
 ‘ and to *officiate* publicly among them in
 ‘ their *own Tongue*; which was a Means not
 ‘ only to render him more serviceable, but of
 ‘ mightily endearing him to his People, who
 ‘ could not be insensible of the Goodness and
 ‘ singular Condescension he expressed by being
 ‘ at the Pains of *learning* their Language for
 ‘ no other End but to shew his earnest Desires
 ‘ of doing them *more good*. Again it was
 ‘ upon the same Principle (as I am informed)
 ‘ that Dr. *Bradford*, the worthy and learned
 ‘ Bishop of *Carlisle*, though there were many
 ‘ Motives to induce him to it, did yet de-
 ‘ cline of accepting a Bishopric in *Wales*, be-
 ‘ cause he was a *Stranger to the Language*;
 ‘ and that he therefore conscientiously feared
 ‘ he should not be able to be *so useful* to his
 ‘ Diocese, nor so capable of *edifying* and *in-*
 ‘ *structing* them as he thought himself obliged
 ‘ to be. What think you of such Men as
 ‘ these?’

E. Thosc

E. Those were brave Men indeed; but I admire, Mr. *Dobson*, why *Gentlemen of England* will give themselves the Trouble of learning a strange Language and clambring with their *Portmanteau's* and *Cloak-bags* into the Cold hilly Country of *Wales* for *Bishoprics*, when there are so many of the *Natives* who are used to the Roughness of the Roads and the Sharpness of the Air, that are sufficiently qualified by understanding the *Welsh* Tongue to execute that venerable Office; for *my own* Part, I can only answer for myself; I shall be always ready upon the least Notice when God and my King shall please to call me to that laborious and important Trust; and I may say without *Vanity*—but, I see one of the *Bearers* coming; they stay for me in the *Church-yard*; I must take my leave.

D. Remember the *Pig* To-morrow.



F I N I S.



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